

People's Participation in the Decision-Making of the Local Government Institutions: Study of Selected Local Governments in Ampara District

Fowsar, MAM*

The participatory approach to sustainable development has become popular in the world, which is often termed bottom up approach for management and decision-making. It is also considered as an important part of governance and it means people's involvement in decision-making, planning and implementing of policy objectives. In this way, most of the democratic countries have extended their commitment to ensure the people's participation in the decision-making process and it is practiced through democratic decentralization. In Sri Lanka, the elected local governments are established through democratic decentralization and represent the lowest tier of government in Sri Lanka. They include Municipal Council, Urban Council and Pradeshiya Sabha. Hence, this study attempts to examine the level of people's participation in the decision-making of the local government institutions in the selected local governments in Ampara district of Sri Lanka (Sammanthurai, Nintavur, Karaithivu and Navithanveli). The study is qualitative in nature. In order to construct the study, the required materials are gathered from various sources. It includes interviews, observations of meetings, scanning of official records and secondary source materials both published and unpublished, as well as informal discussion with possible actors including media. The finding shows that these institutions are in a crisis with regarding people's participation in the decision-making process.

Key words: Decision Making, Democratic Decentralization, Local Government, People's Participation

To whom correspondence should be addressed: fowsar2009@gmail.com

*Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka